

## CIVIL SERVICES: THE HEART OF INDIAN ADMINISTRATION

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### *Abstract*

*Administration of a country is run by the officials who are called as civil servants. In real terms, civil servants form the 'heart of public administration'. Hence, it is important to appoint the right kind of civil servants and to set up appropriate public organizations where the civil servants are placed on recruitment and training. This article deals with the evolution, importance, constitutional base, recruitment and reforms initiatives in Indian Civil Services. It concludes with the recommendations of recent committees and commissions for making the civil services as an efficient mechanism to serve the people.*

**Keywords:** *Bureaucracy' Civil Service, Recruitment, Reforms, Pay Commission, Public Services, Performance*

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In common practice, the terms 'civil service', 'public service' and 'bureaucracy' are often used interchangeably with each other. It will be useful here to understand the connotation expressed by each of them. The original use of the term 'bureaucracy' referred to a cloth that covered the desks of eighteenth-century French officials. It was a way of describing a government ruled by officials. Over time, the term 'bureaucracy' acquired a negative connotation. It was used to describe procedures which were unreasonably time-consuming, and led to the harassment of people and petty tyranny of officials (Das 2013: vii). Because of the negative connotation associated with bureaucracy, the term 'civil servant' came to be used instead.

### **Defining Civil Services**

There is very little difference between a bureaucrat and a civil servant, although the latter also means a full-time employee of the government. The term 'civil service', as it is used now, has two distinct meanings. First,

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it is a branch of the governmental service in which individuals are employed on the basis of merit as tested in an examination. Second, it refers to a body of employees in any governmental agency other than the military and the judiciary (Das 2013: VIII). Thus, 'Civil service' primarily refers to government officials appointed on the basis of merit tested by an examination.

While civil service is a more restrictive term, 'public service' refers to a system of employment maintained by the government for supplying essential services or commodities (Maheshwary 2013:280). In that sense, all the government employees including military and judiciary are members of the public service. Civil servants are public servant also, but judges and military officers are not necessarily civil servants. Thus, the term 'public service' is much broader than civil service.

### **Civil Services in India: an evolutionary perspective**

Civil services in India evolved during colonial period, first during company rule, and then during direct British Government rule. All Company servants, to start with, came from England and had to execute a covenant before coming to India to the effect that they would serve the Company with good conduct and be loyal, hence the usage, 'Covenanted Service'. There was no concept of an office, only a variety of tasks were given to the servants of the Company.

By 1765, the term 'civil servant' started appearing in the records of the East India Company to describe its officials. This was done to distinguish between those engaged in civil and military activities. Before that, the lowest functionary of the East India Company was called a 'factor', meaning a commercial agent. The trading station where the factors worked was called a 'factory'. In 1765, the Company ordered for only writers (clerks appointed by the company) to be recruited, and the point of entry to the civil service of the East India Company became that of the Writer. To be appointed as a writer, it was necessary to get a nomination from a director of the Company, which used to be made only on financial considerations (Das 2013:13). This practice encouraged corruption, which became such scandal that the British Parliament had to intervene and pass the Charter Act of 1793, which made it mandatory for the directors of the

company to take an oath that they will not make any nomination in exchange of money or gifts.

The Indians had no place in the public services till 1833. The 1831-32 Select committee under the chairmanship of Thomas B. Macaulay dealt with the issue of Indianization. The committee wanted that the Indians should be admitted to higher civil services which would strengthen their attachment to British domination and lead to considerable savings in the expenses of the Government. The Charter Act of 1833 provided that no man shall be, by reason of his religion, place of birth, descent, color or any of them, be disqualified from holding any place, office or employment under the Company.

In 1837, an amendment bill allowed the company board to adopt limited competition as the basis for selection. The board of directors used their patronage till 1853. The Macaulay committee was appointed in 1853, which strongly recommended the open competition system for recruitment to civil services and listed the subjects to be offered in the competitive examination. It also recommended the age of 18-23 years for admission to the tests. The examinations were to be held in London. Consequently, the first examination under the new system for recruitment to the Indian civil service was held in 1855. The merit-based system put in place in 1855 by implementing the Macaulay Committee continues to the present day.

### **Civil services under British Crown**

The East India Company's rule came to an end in 1858 and the British Crown assumed direct responsibility for the Government of India. With the transfer of power to the Crown, the Services were also brought under its control. The Act of 1858 gave the responsibility to determine the conditions of services to the Governor-General in Council. The 1861 Indian Civil Service (ICS) Act created a schedule of positions which were to be filled, under normal conditions, through a competitive examination. In 1878, the secretary of the state ordered that each member of the Covenanted Civil Service would be bound to serve anywhere in India. In this way, these services became All India Services.

The Atchison Commission of 1887 divided the public services into three categories: The Imperial Services for which appointments were made by

the Secretary of State in England, the Provincial Services for which appointments were made by the provincial governments but with the approval of the Government of India and Subordinate Services comprising lower level employees who also were appointed by provincial governments.

The Mont-Ford report (1918) suggested increasing association of Indians with every department of administration. The Government of India Act, 1919 introduced decentralization of administration by transferring certain subjects to the provinces placed under the control of Indian Ministers. In 1921 it was found that Indians accounted only about 13 per cent of the India civil service. It gave further impetus to the demand for more indianisation of the services. At the time of introduction of Dyarchy, there were nine All-India Services. The Government of India Act, 1919 provided for the establishment of the Public Service Commission of five members based on the British model to conduct examinations in India for recruitment to the All India Services. In 1921, in addition to the written examinations, a viva-voce examination was introduced.

On the basis of the recommendations of the Lee Commission (1923), recruitment and control of Central services were delegated to the Government of India. The 1935 Act provided elaborate safeguards to secure in part that the existing civil servants shall not suffer through the political changes more than is inevitable, and in part that future servants shall be recruited under conditions which will as far as possible maintain sound traditions (Keith 414). The Act further provided for the establishment of a Federal Public Service Commission for two or more provinces.

The question of retention of All-India Services had again come up for discussion in 1946 when Indian independence was close at hand. As the interim government assumed power on 2 September 1946, the question came up whether a central or provincial civil service (PCS) should replace the ICS. Sardar Patel, the Home Minister, was aware of the need for increased provincial autonomy, but was afraid of 'provincial susceptibilities'. Thus, he successfully argued for a central service which could be efficient, impartial and free from local and communal bias, party allegiance or political influence (Mishra:301). A quota of 25 per cent was set for promotion from PCS to the Indian Administrative Service, successor to

the ICS. Article 312 of the Constitution of independent India regularized the existence of two All India Services i.e. Indian Administrative Service (IAS) and the Indian Police Service (IPS) (Tummala 1996:36). It also included provision for the creation of new all India Services. Thus, a new chapter began in the history of Indian Civil services.

### **Civil services in independent India**

When India became independent, many things changed, but the basic framework of the civil service continues. The ICS was succeeded by the Indian Administrative Service (IAS). In the post-independent India, the IAS has emerged as the elite corps to man the important decision-making positions in the administrative system. The pattern of IAS supremacy is also visible in the state government and local bodies. Today IAS is the core of the country's administrative structure, sharing its tasks with a number of All India, Central and State services, providing strong administrative links throughout the country. Following is the present classification of civil services in India.

- All India Services
- Central Services
- State Services

### **All India Services: Steel frame of Indian administration**

All India services are those services which are common to both central and state governments. Presently, India has three All India Services: Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Police Service (IPS) and Indian Forest Service (IFS). The constitution under Article 312 contains the provision for setting up of All India Services. The following arguments are put forward in favour of All India Services.

- Mechanism of promoting national integration,
- Providing a national vision of development,
- Ensuring uniform administrative system,
- Coordinating link between Centre and states,
- Provide independent and impartial civil services at national level, and,
- Share rich experience among different states.

### **Recruitment and Placement**

The All India Services and the Central Services in India are recruited on the basis of an open national level competitive examinations conducted by UPSC. There is a provision of reservation of posts to the extent of 50 per cent in all categories of the civil services for the members belonging to the Schedule Caste, Schedule Tribes and Other Backward Classes.

The officers of All India Services serve the Central government, Union territories as well as state governments. The Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pension is the Cadre controlling authority for these services. The authorized strength of India Administrative Service in 2011 was 6077, while the actual serving officers in the service was 4356. (ARC 2010)

The Indian Administrative Service (IAS) is the most important among all the services in the country. This is partly from the advantage that the IAS enjoy over other civil services in pay scales and faster promotions, and partly from the job content of the positions that they hold. The IAS officers, on their appointment, are allotted to a particular state. It is in this state that they specialize and learn the language of the state, customs, laws, and so on, and pass examinations in these subjects. All their postings in the field such as in the subdivision, district, etc, are in this state. Part of their career is usually spent in the Central Government (Dass:32). The important posts in the states are reserved for the IAS in order to promote quality impartiality, integrity and an all India outlook in the administrative system.

### **Central Civil Services**

The central services belong to the Central government and serve different departments of the central government. These personnel are controlled by the respective ministries or departments. The members of the central services serve in the central government and the offices of the central government in the states and union territories. Unlike the All India services, the central service officials do not work under the state governments while working in the states.

Central services in India have four classifications: Central Services Group A, Group B, Group C and Group D. Group A comprises of 59 important

services which include-the Indian Foreign Service, Indian Audit and Accounts Service, Indian Postal Service, and Central Secretariat Service. Group B consists of 33 corresponding services to Group A. Recruitment to Group and B services are done by the UPSC. The Group C Central services consist of clerical personnel and their recruitment is done by the Staff Selection Commission. Group D consists of manual personnel like peons, gardeners etc. Thus, Group A and Group B comprises gazette officers while Group C and Group D are non-gazetted class.

### **Union Public Service Commission (UPSC)-Recruitment body**

Indianisation of the superior Civil Services became one of the major demands of the political movement compelling the British Indian Government to consider setting up of a Public Service Commission for recruitment to its services in the territory. The first Public Service Commission was set up on October 1st, 1926. However, its limited advisory functions failed to satisfy the people's aspirations and the continued stress on this aspect by the leaders of our freedom movement resulted in the setting up of the Federal Public Service Commission under the Government of India Act 1935. Under this Act, for the first time, provision was also made for the formation of Public Service Commission's at the provincial level.

The Constituent Assembly, after independence, saw the need for giving a secure and autonomous status to Public Service Commission's both at Federal and Provincial levels for ensuring unbiased recruitment to Civil Services as also for protection of service interests. With the promulgation of the new Constitution for independent India on 26th January, 1950, the Federal Public Service Commission was accorded a constitutional status as an autonomous entity and given the title-Union Public Service Commission

### **Constitutional Provisions**

The Union Public Service Commission has been established under Article 315 of the Constitution of India. The Commission consists of a Chairman and ten Members. The terms and conditions of service of Chairman and Members of the Commission are governed by the Union Public Service Commission (Members) Regulations, 1969. The Commission is serviced by

a Secretariat headed by a Secretary with two Additional Secretaries, a number of Joint Secretaries, Deputy Secretaries and other supporting staff.

The Union Public Service Commission have been entrusted with the following duties and role under the Constitution:

1. Recruitment to services & posts under the Union through conduct of competitive examinations;
2. Recruitment to services & posts under the Central Government by Selection through Interviews;
3. Advising on the suitability of officers for appointment on promotion as well as transfer-on-deputation;
4. Advising the Government on all matters relating to methods of Recruitment to various services and posts;
5. Disciplinary cases relating to different civil services; and
6. Miscellaneous matters relating to grant of extra ordinary pensions, reimbursement of legal expenses etc.

The major role played by the Commission is to select persons to man the various Central Civil Services and Posts and the Services common to the Union and States (viz. All-India Services).The composition of the commission include ten members including its chairman.

### **Training of Civil Services**

After independence the IAS training school was set up in Metcalfe House in Delhi, where all the probationers were imparted one year training. On the basis of the recommendations made by Appleby Report(1953),Indian Institute of Public Administration was set up in 1954.This was followed by the establishment of the National Academy of Administration at Mussoorie in 1959 with the merger of the Training School, Delhi and IAS Staff College, Simla. In 1985, a new ministry of personnel, public grievances and pension was created with the department of personnel and training as one of its three departments.

Currently, all Group A services are required to undergo a two-year induction training. The content of the training programme varies from service to service. Induction training for the All India Services and Central

Services Group A consists of a Foundation course and a Professional course. Foundation course is common to the IAS, IPS and other Central Services Group A. For the non-Group A services, the pattern varies. While some have mandatory induction training, others do not and report directly to their departments for posting. The letters are expected to learn on job.

### **Civil Service Reforms**

Reforms are an obvious response to the new challenges confronting state institutions managing public affairs. At the root of such an exercise lies the effort at enhancing administrative capability in the changed scenario. In recent times, the problem of administrative reforms has received continuing attention in India both at the centre and in the states. The Indian response to the new circumstances was clearly articulated in the 1996 conference of chief secretaries. The focus of the conference was on having an accountable, open and citizen-friendly government and on improving the performance and integrity. It recognized that the public image of the bureaucracy was one of inaccessibility, indifference, procedure orientation, poor quality and sluggishness, corruption and non-accountability for result.<sup>28</sup>The follow-up action of the conference included:

- Developing grievances redressal machinery,
- Formulation of citizen's charters by all ministries with public interface,
- Setting up of an inter-ministerial working group on Right to Information and Transparency by H.D. Shourie,
- Constituting an expert group to look into the computerization in personnel system and public services headed by N. Vittal, and
- Initiating civil service reforms especially the transfer and promotion in Centre and States.

Thus the conference initiated a national debate on effective and responsive administration which culminated in an Action Plan discussed and adopted in the conference of Chief Ministers on 24th May 1997. The Action Plan has three components:

- Accountable and citizen-friendly government,

- Transparency and right to information, and,
- Improving the performance and integrity of the public services.

In order to have an accountable and citizen-friendly Government the Action Plan specifies that all the Central and State Governments would formulate citizen's charter for departments and offices, starting with those which have a large public interface to be operational over the next three months. All central and state departments would facilitate at various levels for the prompt and effective redressal of public grievances from the secretariat downwards to the village to be operational over the next three months. The Action Plan also recognized the need for greater decentralization and devolution of administrative powers at all levels. It emphasized to strengthen people's participation in consistent with the spirit of the 73rd and 74th amendments of the constitution, involvement of the people and voluntary agencies in the delivery of services and devolution of administrative powers. The conference recognized that secrecy and lack of openness in transactions is largely responsible for corruption in official dealings. Thus step would be taken to ensure easy access of the people to all information relating to government activities and decisions. In this regard the government would take immediate necessary steps for examining the report of the working group on Right to Information and for introducing in parliament legislation for Freedom of Information. The Action plan also aimed at imposing the performance and integrity of the civil services. It was agreed that elimination of corruption in public services would require prevention, surveillance and deterrent prosecution. For this investigation agencies and vigilance machinery would be strengthened. It was agreed that institutional arrangements should be evolved for enabling objective and transparent decisions as postings, promotions and transfers of officials, particularly those working in key areas to ensure stability to tenure and depoliticized postings at all levels to sustain their morale.

#### **Fifth and Sixth Pay Commissions**

In view of the above well-directed designs for Civil Service reform, the recommendations of the Fifth Pay Commission are another milestone in this direction. True to the spirit, expressed in the 1996 Chief Secretaries conference, the Fifth pay Commission has recommended (a) downsizing

the government through the corporatization of activities which involves 'malfunctioning of goods or the provision of commercial services';(b) transparency, openness and economy in government operation through the 'privatization of activities where government does not need to play a direct role' and also the 'contracting out services which can be conveniently outsourced to the private sector'<sup>29</sup>; and (c) the contractual appointment in selected areas of operations 'for the purpose of maintaining a certain flexibility in staffing both the lateral entry of experts, moderating the numbers deployed depending on the exigencies of work and ensuring availability of component and committed personnel for certain sensitive/specialized jobs.'<sup>30</sup>

The central government has been advised to go for a thirty per cent reduction in the strength of the civil services, as the Pay Commission felt that it would be unwise to let the government sector continue as 'an island of inefficiency' and 'inertia'. The normal procedure of voluntary retirement after completing twenty years would be continued. Alongside this, the Commission recommended a special scheme of voluntary retirement in the departments where surplus manpower was identified. In such cases, there would be a provision for the selective retirement of persons, the initiative always resting with the government for a golden handshake. The Pay Commission also stated that the role of the Government will be more in evolving the policy of governance and less in the actual governance itself. Most Government departments will have to function as facilitators rather than inhibitors of growth. New regulators will have to be evolved and enforced so as to provide a level playing field as between the public and private sector enterprises, as also between domestic and foreign companies. The administered price mechanisms will have to be replaced by mechanisms based on market-determined prices.

The other significant recommendations of the Commission concerns 'openness' in administration. Defending the repeal of 'the Official Secrets Act of the old colonial days', the Commission insists on openness which 'means giving everyone the right to access to information about the various decisions taken by the Government and the reasoning behind them'. As an integral part of civil service reform, the commission insisted on the formation of efficient grievance redressal machinery that has to be effective, speedy, objective, readily accessible and easy to operate'.

Drawing upon the examples of Canada, U.K. and Malaysia where effective grievance redressal cells have been functioning efficiently, the idea of a Citizen's Charter-defining the rights of the customers of government schemes and services- was mooted by the Commission. The recognition and the procedures suggested in this connection are of crucial importance from the point of debureaucratising government and making it citizen-friendly. The issues, raised by the Pay Commission figured prominently in the 1997 Conference of Chief Ministers where an action plan was adopted to (a) make the administration accountable and citizen-friendly, (b) ensure transparency and right to information and (c) adopt measures to cleanse and motivate the civil services.

The Government of India constituted the sixth central pay commission on 5th October, 2006 which submitted its report on March 24, 2008. It is the first Central Pay Commission to be constituted in this century of rapid technological advances and after coming into force of the Right to Information (RTI) and Fiscal responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Acts. The Government machinery, therefore, has to gear up for better performance under stricter fiscal discipline and delivery mechanisms. These imperatives are reflected in the 'terms of reference' of the Sixth Central Pay Commission which made it incumbent on the Commission to recommend systematic changes for, (i) transforming the Central Government organizations into modern, professional and citizen friendly entities that are dedicated to the service of the people; and (ii) harmonizing functioning of the Central Government Organizations with the demands of the emerging global economic scenario.

The Sixth Central Pay Commission, therefore, had not only to evolve a proper pay package for the Government employees but also to make recommendations rationalizing the governmental structure with a view to improving the delivery mechanisms for providing better services to the common man. The main recommendations of the commission which have a bearing on Good Governance are as follows:

Reduction of layers: The commission has recommended reducing the layers within the government structure so that decisions making and delivery is expedited. From 35 standard pay scales, the grades have been reduced to 20- spread across four distinct running pay bands, one apex scale and another grade for the post of Cabinet Secretary/ equivalent.

Restoring pride in public services: Government employees have to be motivated to take pride in public services. Thus the commission has recommended various measures for job enhancement and job enrichment. The functions presently being discharged by Assistants and Private Secretaries will now be carried out by Executive Assistants. Up gradation of all posts in Group D in the Government to Group C along with their retraining and multitasking will provide enlargement and enrichment of functions and responsibilities to a large section of government employees.

Delegation with accountability: Restoring delegation with accountability at each level in the decision-making process at each level in the decision-making process is one of the main thrust areas proposed by the commission. Up gradation of the critical cutting edge jobs like teachers, staff nurses, constables etc. has been recommended. Strengthening the decentralized levels with parity between fielder offices and the secretariat has also been recommended as the motivation and performance of the field and program me officers is critical to improve service delivery to the common man.

Ensuring the availability of the best possible talent for Government: The commission has recommended for lateral entry at higher level in the Government to ensure availability of the best possible talent from within and outside government with performance contracts. It suggests a shift from career-based to post-based selection in the higher echelons of Government in order to get the best domain based expertise. A higher start and better incentives have been recommended at the initial entry level so as to attract a younger talented profile. No increase in retirement age is recommended as an active younger employee profile is best suited for the tasks ahead. Additionally, it argues for a market driven compensation package for young scientist and posts requiring special expertise and professional skills.

Performance Related incentive scheme: The introduction of performance related incentive scheme "(PRIS) is designed to reward performance, innovation, creativity and responsive delegated administration of stakeholder interface for inclusive outcomes and service delivery. This will be a budget neutral tool for results-based management with performance targets, standards and indicators and greater accountability.

The Sixth Pay Commission is a watershed in the evolution of India's civil services for a variety of reasons. This is not a pay commission in the ordinary sense of the term since it has also sought to reshape the bureaucracy in the light of emerging global trends. By suggesting significant changes in the administrative hierarchy, the Commission translates into reality the drive towards 'debureaucratisation'.

### **Review Committees on Civil Service examinations**

The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) in 2001 appointed a committee of experts under the chairmanship of Prof. Yogendra Kumar Alagh to review the existing scheme of civil services examinations. The main complaint about the prelims pattern of exams was that, it was a test of memory more than knowledge. The committee after its study concluded that a mismatch exists between the suitability or aptitude and the service allocated to a candidate. The Alagh committee recommended an aptitude test with emphasis on comprehension, logical reasoning, and problem solving and data analysis. Based on these recommendations the UPSC has finally decided to change the pattern of the preliminary examination. This entrance test would be rechristened 'civil service aptitude test' (CSAT) and will be in practice from year 2011-12. In the new scheme there will be two objective papers in the prelims: (i) General studies (already in practice) and (ii) Aptitude test, each will carry 200 marks and of two hours duration. However there will be no optional subject based paper and the new scheme will test the candidates on their aptitude, decision-making skills and analytical abilities rather than their memorizing ability.

The Hota Committee on civil Services reforms, 2004 is another initiative by the government to examine the whole gamut of a civil service reform. The Committee made the following important recommendations<sup>34</sup>:

- Age for entrants to civil services should be 21-24 years for general candidates with five years age concession to members of SC/STs and three years for OBCs,
- Annual performance plans for the officers,
- After 15 years of rigorous review if an officer is not found honest and performance oriented, he be weeded out of service,

- The duties, functions and responsibilities of all senior posts to be laid down and publicized,
- Article 311 of the constitution be amended to enable President/Governor to dismiss/remove public servants in case of corrupt practice/having assets disproportionate to known source of income
- Antiquated rules and procedures in government must be discarded and new simplified ones are put in place,
- E-Governance to be encouraged to augment efficiency and ensure transparency in government
- Civil servants should be encouraged to move laterally to non-governmental organizations, and
- To increase the representation of women in the civil services; it is proposed that within 15 years, at least 25 percent members of the higher civil service should be women as against 13 percent women at present.

Nonetheless there are concerns about the performance of civil service in the context of realizing a result oriented government. It has been pointed out the civil service in India is more concerned with the internal processes than with results. It is widely recognized that the civil services have played an important role in preserving unity, providing stability and maintaining order in a vast country like India prone to various conflicts-ethnic, communal, regional etc. The systematic rigidities, needless complexities and over centralization in the policy and management structures within which the civil service functions are too complex and often too constraining. Rapid and fundamental changes are taking place in the country in terms of rapid economic growth, urbanization, environmental degradations, technological change and increased local awareness and identity. The response time to adapt to these changes is much shorter than it used to be. As instruments of public service, civil servants have to be ready to manage such change.

#### **Moily Committee on Administrative reforms**

Based on the need to reform the civil services as highlighted in the foregoing paragraphs, the second Administrative Reform Commission; set up by the Government on 31.8.2005 under the chairmanship of Veerappa Moily to prepare a detailed blueprint for revamping the public

administration system. The commission was asked to suggest measures to achieve a 'proactive, responsive, accountable, sustainable and efficient administration for the country at all levels of the government'. The commission has presented 15 reports to the government for consideration. Some of the important recommendations of the commission include:

- (a) A National Institute of Public Administration to be established to offer Bachelor's Degree courses in Public Administration/governance/management
- (b) The permissible age for appearing in the civil services examinations to be 21 to 25 years for general candidate; 21 to 28 years for candidates from OBC and 21 to 29 years for candidates from SC/ST and physically challenged candidates,
- (c) The number of permissible attempts should be three, five and six and six respectively,
- (d) As a capacity building measure it suggests that every government servant should undergo a mandatory training at the induction stage and also periodically during his/her career,
- (e) A central civil services authority to be set up which, among other things, would formulate guidelines for appointments at the 'Senior Management Level' in Government of India,
- (f) Citizen centricity with the aim of ensuring citizen's welfare and citizens' satisfaction is critical for any government, which aims to provide good governance. The commission suggests a number of strategies and tools which can be employed to make the administration citizen-centric, viz. Adoption of appropriate modern technology, Right to information, Citizens' charter, Grievance redressal mechanism and active citizens' participation, 35
- (g) In order to ensure ethics in Governance, the commission recommends for the establishment of a National ombudsman to be called as 'Rashtriya Lokayukta',
- (h) It suggests that the state vigilance commission/Lokayukta may be empowered to supervise the prosecution of corruption related cases,

- (i) The commission recommends for greater devolution of powers and responsibilities in order to empower the local institutions of governance. It is of the opinion that a comprehensive exercise needs to be taken up regarding broadening and deepening of the revenue base of local governments,
- (j) The commission also recommends that all offices with a larger public interface should have an online complaint tracking system, and,
- (k) The commission in its first report titled 'Right to Information: Master Key to Good Governance' has recommended that the official secrets Act, 1923 be replaced and substituted by a chapter in the National Security Act. The manual of office procedure be revised in the light of the provisions of the RTI Act, 2005 with regard to 'communications of official Information'. The ARC also suggested that Members of Parliament and Members of State Legislative Assembly should be declared as 'Public Authorities' under the Right to Information Act, except when they are discharging legislative functions.<sup>36</sup> Thus the Second ARC has presented a comprehensive document dealing with the Civil service reforms in India.

### **Concluding Observations**

Civil service is the most important instrument for implementing people's will and aspirations as expressed in the constitution. To a large extent, it has been successful in bringing socio-economic change in the country. But it has also a negative image in the eyes of the people due to corruption, redtapism and nepotistic tendencies of the bureaucracy. Thus, the civil service has to undergo radical structural, procedural and attitudinal changes if it has to serve the people as an effective instrument of change and progress. It has to cultivate much wider social awareness and responsiveness as well as social sensitivity apart from the traditional virtues of integrity, efficiency and impartiality. We hope that the recent administrative reforms India has initiated would be able to reorient the civil services into a dynamic, efficient and accountable apparatus of public service delivery.

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